

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 405 385

UD 029 365

AUTHOR Romines, Kenneth R.
TITLE How Proactive Parent-School Involvement Changes Educational Opportunities for At-Risk Children. 1987-1991 Report.
INSTITUTION Mission Reading Clinic, San Francisco, CA.
SPONS AGENCY Zellerbach Family Fund, San Francisco, Calif.
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 30p.
AVAILABLE FROM Mission Reading Clinic, 2701 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Annual Reports; Data Collection; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnic Groups; *High Risk Students; Leadership Training; Low Income Groups; Mathematics Education; Parent Empowerment; *Parents as Teachers; Parent School Relationship; *Parent Workshops; Program Evaluation; Science Education; Tables (Data)

ABSTRACT

This report reviews 5 years of work involving the Parent Empowerment Project (PEP) and also examines the results of a study that was undertaken to plot the changes in school performance of at-risk children and youth that have occurred since their parents became involved with PEP. It includes: (1) a summary of the demographics and characteristics of PEP participants; (2) an analysis of the similarities and differences in the 1990-1991 support groups and those of prior years; (3) a summary of the progress of the leadership training component of PEP; (4) a progress report and description of the Family Math and Family Science Workshops; (5) the status of how PEP is preparing to become self-sufficient after the private funding is complete next year; (6) new developments in PEP; (7) reflections on what continues to be learned from working with PEP; and (8) the initial report of research into whether parents' PEP participation affects their children's academic performance and chances of staying in school. Appendices include a description of the family math and science curricula, a copy of the PEP questionnaire, and an outline of the PEP Parent Leadership Curriculum. (GLR)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

1987-1991 REPORT

HOW PROACTIVE PARENT-SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT CHANGES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

by Kenneth R. Romines, Ed.D.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Carlos Nobasco
Mission Reading Clinic

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).



PARENT EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (PEP)

A project of Mission Reading Clinic

UD 029365



Errata

1987-1991 Report, Parent Empowerment Project

Corrections are in **bold face and are underlined**

PAGE 14

5. How does your child perform now (in school) compared to before you participated in PEP?

worse	0
no change	4
good	7
better	<u>12</u>
much better	22
already doing good (before PEP)	13
no response	4

Analysis: **65% (41)** of parents surveyed indicated that their children's school performance had improved since they began PEP activities. This question, in and of itself, does not indicate whether the parents' increasing skills and knowledge about themselves and the schools caused change in their child's educational environment or achievement. Responses to this question, however, do indicate that **nearly two-thirds** of parents believed their children were performing better or much better in school after they participated in support group activities. The following **two** questions describe the types of skills and knowledge parents developed from PEP activities, and how they were able to use the skills and knowledge to improve educational opportunities for their children.

PAGE 15, column 2, analysis of question 8, 2nd paragraph, last sentence

...This seems to contradict the stereotype of parents of at-risk youngsters and the data in Question 5, in which **65%** of parents reported improvement in children's academic achievement.

PAGE 16, Survey conclusions

Survey results indicate that parents' participation in PEP positively affected their ability to interact with the schools and their children's academic achievement. Grades and attendance increased for **65%** of the participants' children...

1987-1991 REPORT

HOW PROACTIVE PARENT-SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT
CHANGES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

by Kenneth R. Romines, Ed.D.



PARENT EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (PEP)

A project of Mission Reading Clinic

For copies of this report:
Mission Reading Clinic
2701 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 282-3800

Report editing, design and production: San Francisco Study Center

© 1992, Zellerbach Family Fund

Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Introduction	1
PEP Participants 1987 - 1991	1
Table 1: Demographics	2
Development of Support Groups	4
Geographic changes	
School and community agency service sites	
Number and language of support groups	
Focus of support group content and activities	
Development of Parent Leadership Training	5
Family Math and Science Workshops	5
Table 2: Family Science and Math Groups Winter 1991	6
Table 3: Family Math and Science Summer 1991	7
Table 4: Family Math and Science Fall 1991	8
Developing Self-Sufficient PEP Groups	9
New Developments	9
What We Are Learning	10
A Study to Examine PEP Outcomes	13
Appendices	
i Family Math and Science Curriculum	19
ii Parent Survey	21
iii Level 1 Curriculum	22
iv Level 2 Curriculum	23
v Parent Leadership Curriculum	24

Acknowledgements

The parents, Board of Directors and staff of Mission Reading Clinic gratefully recognize the efforts and support of the following individuals and organizations in building and sustaining PEP:

Edward Nathan, Executive Director, Zellerbach Family Fund, a founder of LaPEP and PEP, for your vision, guidance and continuing generosity and commitment since we began the project five years ago.

Claude Hogan, President, Ernst D. and Eleanor Slate van Loben Sels Charitable Foundation, a founder of LaPEP and PEP, for your continuing interest, support and generosity over the last five years.

Ramon Cortines, Superintendent, San Francisco Unified School District, for your leadership and success in building bridges between schools and the homes of our children.

Larry del Carlo, Director, Mayor's Office of Community Development, for your support of our efforts to proactively address the needs of our children and youth.

Deborah Lee and the Support Group Training Project for working with PEP leadership training and being part of our roots.

Marjorie Beggs for your significant editorial and technical assistance and your invaluable observations and advice as we began PEP.

Members of the PEP Advisory Committee: Lauren Aderele, Marjorie Beggs, Wilma Espinoza, Dr. Luz Mary Harris, Carlos Nolasco, Lucy Olivas, Maria Teresa Ponce, Ellen Walker and George Welch for your time, energy and invaluable guidance.

Members of the San Francisco Protagonist, as the founders of LaPEP and PEP, for your vision, support and continuing service to our communities.

The San Francisco Health Project for supporting our efforts to build PEP into a citywide service.

The Koret Foundation and the Stuart Foundations for helping PEP start the Family Science and Family Math components.

Faculties, administrators and staff of San Francisco schools and community agencies for your commitment to parent involvement and the development of our children.

Introduction

EVERY YEAR since 1989, the Parent Empowerment Project has presented a formal report about what we do and what we continue to learn from our work. Though the reports have taken a different form each year, their purpose always has remained the same: to identify PEP activities and demonstrate the growth in services during the academic year, and to consider grassroots parent empowerment — how it occurs and how the process affects communities' and parents' interaction with schools and teachers.

This year's report reviews five years of work and also examines the results of a study we undertook to plot the changes in school performance of at-risk children and youth that have occurred since their parents became involved with PEP. The study also considers the possible reasons for these changes. Results were based on an interview-administered questionnaire, examination of grades, teacher comments and tests scores of students, and observation of children in the classroom.

This report includes:

- A summary of the demographics and characteristics of PEP participants
- An analysis of the similarities and differences in the 1990-1991 support groups and those of prior years
- A summary of the progress of the leadership training component of PEP
- A progress report and description of the Family Math and Family Science Workshops
- The status of the Program Self-Sufficiency strategy — specifically, how is PEP preparing to become self-sufficient after the private funding is complete next year?
- New developments in PEP
- Reflections on what we continue to learn from our work with PEP
- Initial report of our research into whether parents' PEP participation affects their children's academic performance and chances of staying in school

PEP Participants 1987-1991

SINCE THE beginning of the program as Latino Parent Empowerment Project (LaPEP) in 1986, a total of 404 parents have participated in and completed one or more program activities. The number of involved parents has grown steadily — up about 35% every year for the first three years. However, the 1990-1991 level of participation jumped 52% from the previous year, up to 163 parents. Much of this increase in participation occurred in new schools and neighborhoods that requested PEP activities.

The following demographic breakdown of participants during the last four years demonstrates the diversity of the families who have benefited from their involvement with PEP.

Some data and trends in the demographic breakdown are noteworthy. The relative number of fathers or male participants has decreased in the last four years. Between 1987 and 1991, the percent of males as total participants fell from 10% to 6%. The number of African American participants, however, is significantly higher.

The level of Latino participation in 1990-1991 was 19% lower than in previous years, a decline due not to reduced recruitment but to the fact that PEP-trained leaders now are running Spanish-language support groups, not funded through PEP, at Hawthorn Elementary School, Wilson High School, St. John's Thresholds Center and Mission Recreation Center.

As PEP has spread its focus to other ethnic and

language groups besides Latinos, the numbers in the categories of immigration, countries of origin and languages spoken in the homes have become more diffused.

As services expanded to the Alemany/Excelsior and Ocean View/ Ingleside neighborhoods over the four years, the number of participants who reside in public-assisted housing increased from 0% to 32% and the number of participants who receive AFDC or other government assistance rose from 0% to 63%.

Participants' occupations remained relatively constant in the last two years, with about two-thirds indicating they are homemakers.

The household incomes of participants have steadily decreased in the last four years. Using the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development income guidelines, the number of households in poverty (low- and very low-income categories) shot up from 74% in 1987 to 93% in 1991. The current economic recession explains part of this increase, but also the program has expanded to meet needs of more at-risk children, many living in neighborhoods that are the city's most economically depressed.

Data on the children of families served by PEP have changed, too. Mean household size increased by 18%, and the number of children in a household increased by 14%. The children living at home with PEP parents are older than in previous years — until 1990, about two-thirds of children were preschool or elementary age. In 1991, only

half of the children were younger than middle-school age. This trend will affect future program planning, which will have to reflect the different roles parents play in older

children's development. If this trend continues, PEP will modify both support group and Family Math and Science curricula and activities.

TABLE 1

Demographics of Parent Participants by Program Year

Category	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991
GENDER				
Females	52	75	99	154
Males	5	2	8	9
Total	57	77	107	163
SINGLE-PARENT HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD				
Females	23	22	35	45
Males	1	—	3	4
Total	24	22	38	49
DISABLED HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD				
Females	1	1	3	5
Males	2	—	—	1
Total	3	1	3	6
ETHNICITY				
Latino	45	66	92	108
Black	5	8	8	45
Whites	4	3	2	4
Asian	5	4	—	—
Others	3	—	—	2
Total	57	77	107	163
PARENTS WHO IMMIGRATED TO THE UNITED STATES				
	40	65	90	112
YEARS RESIDING IN THE UNITED STATES				
1-4 years	5	19	20	31
5-9 years	10	17	22	32
10-14 years	16	19	34	41
More than 14 years	17	10	29	57
No response	9	12	2	2
Total	57	77	107	163
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN				
Mexico	29	47	46	71
Central America	5	18	33	42
South America	1	0	3	4
United States	22	12	15	46
Other	—	—	—	10
No response	—	—	10	2
Total	57	77	107	163

Category	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME				
Spanish	21	38	60	69
English	19	12	15	58
English and Spanish	17	27	32	32
English and other	—	—	—	4
Total	57	77	107	163
TOTAL CHILDREN AT HOME AND HOUSEHOLD DATA				
Children living at home	145	184	268	442
Avg. children per family	2.38	2.62	2.5	2.71
Participant living in subsidized housing	—	1	19	52
Participant receiving AFDC or government assistance	—	—	—	63
SCHOOL LEVELS OF CHILDREN AT HOME				
Preschool	28	36	30	64
Elementary school	67	93	142	176
Middle school	25	35	38	106
High school	19	16	48	82
Post-secondary	6	4	10	14
Total	145	184	268	442
CHILDREN IN SPECIAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS				
Special education	12	4	10	16
Gifted education	5	10	6	26
Bilingual education/ESL	15	58	42	99
Total	32	72	58	141
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARTICIPANTS				
Elementary school	5	13	33	66
Middle school	14	2	20	31
High school	18	25	28	42
Post-secondary	20	7	24	20
No schooling	—	2	1	3
No response	—	2	1	1
Total	57	77	107	163
OCCUPATION OF PARTICIPANTS				
Blue-collar service	12	23	15	34
White-collar service	12	2	10	11
Blue-collar manufacturing	26	42	4	5
Homemaker	3	8	74	105
Unemployed	2	5	—	6
Disabled	2	3	5	2
Total	57	78	107	163

Demographics of Parent Participants by Program Year

Category	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991
ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME				
Less Than \$8,000	6	16	15	32
\$8,000 - 12,000	11	15	41	61
\$12,001 - 16,000	13	19	15	44
\$16,001 - 20,000	10	10	11	15
\$20,001 - 24,000	4	4	8	7
\$24,001 - 28,000	3	5	2	1
More than \$28,000	5	1	5	1
No response	5	8	10	2
Total	57	77	107	163

Development of Support Groups

PEP SUPPORT groups have changed in the last four years to meet the needs of parent participants, schools and the community agencies that work with Mission Reading Clinic.

Geographic changes

PEP began in 1986 by serving parents in the Mission neighborhood. Services now have expanded to the Bay View, Hunters Point, Potrero, Alemany, Excelsior, Ocean View, Sunnydale and South of Market neighborhoods.

School and community agency service sites

1987: One public and one private elementary school and two community agencies

1988: Three public and one private elementary school and two community agencies

1989: Four public and one private elementary school, one middle school and two community agencies

1990: Four public and one private elementary school, one middle school, two high schools, two community agencies, one housing project community center and one branch library

1991: Six public and two private elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, one community day alternative school program, two community agencies, one school district level program, one at-risk parent program and one health center.

Number and language of support groups

1987-1988: 10 Spanish, 3 English and 1 bilingual group

1988-1989: 21 Spanish, 2 English and 2 bilingual groups

1989-1990: 28 Spanish, 3 English and 1 bilingual group

1990-1991: 23 Spanish and 16 English groups

Focus of the support group content and activities

Level 1 activities concentrate on individual and school issues (see appendices iii & iv). Level 2 activities emphasize community and housing project issues (appendix v).

The proportion of Level 1 and Level 2 support groups offered over the history of PEP has varied:

1987-1988: 79% Level 1, 21% Level 2

1988-1989: 44% Level 1, 56% Level 2

1989-1990: 75% Level 1, 25% Level 2

1990-1991: 71% Level 1, 29% Level 2

Level 1 groups worked primarily on school-related and family support issues. The number of Level 2 groups increased when PEP added the topic of resolving community issues to the existing curriculum.

Development of Parent Leadership Training

THE FOLLOWING summarizes how leadership training helped us accomplish two of our long-range goals, and lists the number, type and outcomes of leadership training groups as well as agencies and schools that have requested and received PEP leadership training for their staff.

Goals attainment

Over the last four school years, PEP affirmed two goals of the original program design. First, PEP expected to develop the program with the participation of parents who were likely to be neither social workers nor trained community organizers. In fact, the project has successfully used the parents it has trained in a variety of programs — PEP's four full- and part-time PEP staff are parents who completed leadership training; two parents are trainers in the Family Science and Math programs; and two parents are tutors in Mission Reading Clinic's Learning Center.

PEP's second goal was to develop indigenous parent leadership that could sustain the concept of parent empowerment in the schools and in the community, and do so cost effectively. This was essential to the overall project. If parent empowerment was to continue beyond the program and fiscal constraints of PEP, a cadre of parents had to be prepared to assume advocacy and leadership roles in public and private agencies. By the end of August 1989, the PEP coordinator and three program assistants, all of whom had completed leadership training, were successfully conducting and developing PEP activities. This established the viability of parent leadership as opposed to a therapy-oriented professional model.

The leadership role was expanded when PEP staff who had been trained as Family Math and Family Science trainers began implementing those curricula in 1991.

Number and types of leadership training groups

1987-1988: From 1 English group, 1 parent completed and joined MRC/PEP staff

1988-1989: From 2 Spanish groups, 1 parent completed and joined MRC/PEP staff, 2 parents completed and began co-leading groups, 1 bilingual parent became counselor in a community agency; from 1 English group, 2 parents completed and began co-leading groups

1989-1990: From 1 English group, 1 bilingual parent joined MRC/PEP staff, 1 parent trained in Family Math and began training other parents, 2 parents became community liaisons to housing projects, 1 couple coordinated high school parent program; from 2 Spanish groups, 1 bilingual parent joined MRC/PEP staff, 2 parents trained in Family Math, 1 parent trained in after-school literacy instruction, 1 parent became school-site liaison paid by school district

1990-1991: From 2 Spanish groups, 6 parents co-leading support groups, 1 parent school-site liaison paid by school district, 1 parent tobacco use-prevention trainer, 1 parent public health trainer; from 1 English group, 1 parent joined MRC/PEP staff, 1 PEP staff parent transferred to teach after school.

In addition to the internal training program PEP maintains for its parents and staff, the project has trained parent leaders from other public and private agencies. This ancillary training was provided by PEP staff, primarily in 1990 and 1991, to individuals from St. John's Thresholds, Sunnysdale Community Center, Betel Housing Complex, Hawthorne Elementary School, San Francisco Public Health Center #3, Aptos Middle School, Parents of Children with Special Needs, Family Health Services and Compañeros del Barrio.

Family Math and Family Science Workshops

THESE FAMILY workshops reflect PEP's program philosophy and were created in response to parent requests. Parents in support groups were seeking ways to understand what their children were learning in school and participate in their academic development. PEP feels strongly that:

- Home and community are the child's primary educators. Children take the skills, concepts, learning strategies and knowledge they acquire in school and apply them to their lives outside of school. Educational enrichment, to be effective, must ensure that school learning is relevant to the individual's outside life.

- Everyday, common activities provide immediate, relevant opportunities to apply concepts learned in school.

Day-to-day activities might involve the chemical principles of yeast-rising bread; factoring fractions by measuring floor covering; practicing conservation of volume using measuring cups; comparing distances.

- Children need positive role models outside of school if we want them to value the idea of succeeding in school and internalize the expectation that they will succeed. Parents, foster parents, household elders and siblings are important role models for teaching children to value learning and school.

PEP initiated the family workshops by sending two staff members to the Family Math training program at U.C. Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science. Based on the training and their knowledge of parent and student needs,

staff developed a modified curriculum (appendix i). By 1990, the Family Math program was receiving so much interest from parents in support groups, Mission Reading Clinic sent two staff and one parent co-leader to the Lawrence Hall of Science for training in the Family Science Project.

PEP's family workshops were presented in two formats: During the winter 1990, PEP staff led four Family Math workshops for a total of 14 parents and their children at Mission Reading Clinic. Then, based on the success of these workshops and in response to requests from parents, the Family Math and Science content was presented to Spanish- and English-speaking support groups during the spring, summer and fall 1991 cycles as parts of their regular weekly curriculum. A total of 93 parents participated in and completed the science and math training.

In the transition to support group presentations, staff modified the training format somewhat to accommodate PEP participants. They reduced the training periods to 40-

to 60-minute blocks. Also, instead of following the established content and sequence of the published curriculum, staff adapted activities to the group's interests. Throughout, parents were encouraged to involve their children in the workshop activities and practice with their children in their homework assignments.

The main goal of these workshops is to increase children's long-term learning in math and science. While staff recognize that these workshops alone may not change levels and rates of learning, they believe this type of support and application of knowledge will contribute to changes in children's knowledge and motivation. During the spring, summer and fall 1992, we will survey student grades, teacher comments and parent observations to measure these areas of change.

The following tables detail the math and science workshops that were presented as separate training sessions and as part of the regular support group curriculum.

TABLE 2

Family Math Sessions: Winter 1990-1991
Leaders: Carlos Nolasco and Brenda Stringer

Visitation Valley Middle School, San Francisco

Date	Time	Adults	Children	Scheduled Exercises
Mondays				
1/14	10-11 a.m.	8	2	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
1/28	10-11 a.m.	8	2	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
2/11	10-11 a.m.	8	1	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247
2/25	10-11 a.m.	7	1	p. 111, 112, 147, 148, 206, 184
3/11	10-11 a.m.	7	1	p. 101, 108, 210, 113, 97

Marshall Elementary School, San Francisco

Mondays				
1/16	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
1/30	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
2/6	10-11 a.m.	6	3	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247
2/20	10-11 a.m.	5	3	p. 111, 112, 147, 148, 206, 184
3/6	10-11 a.m.	7	4	p. 101, 108, 210, 113, 97

E.R. Taylor Elementary School, San Francisco

Thursdays				
1/10	10-11 a.m.	9	4	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
2/7	10-11 a.m.	8	5	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
2/21	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247

Hawthorne Elementary School (MRC Office), San Francisco

Tuesday				
1/15	7-7:45 p.m.	5	3	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
2/5	7-7:45 p.m.	6	2	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
3/26	7-7:45 p.m.	5	2	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247

Commodore Stockton Elementary School (MRC Office), San Francisco

Wednesday

1/23	7-7:45 p.m.	7	2	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
2/20	7-7:45 p.m.	7	3	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
3/13	7-7:45 p.m.	6	3	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247

Saint Michael's Elementary School, San Francisco

Thursday

1/10	7-7:45 p.m.	5	3	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
1/24	7-7:45 p.m.	5	3	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
2/14	7-7:45 p.m.	6	3	Valentine's Day Event p. 103, 114, 125, 126
2/28	7-7:45 p.m.	5	3	p. 111, 112, 147, 148, 206, 184
3/14	7-7:45 p.m.	5	1	p. 101, 108, 210, 113, 97

TABLE 3

Family Math and Science Sessions: Summer 1991

Leaders: Carlos Nolasco and Brenda Stringer

Location: Mission Reading Clinic, San Francisco

Math Sessions

Date	Time	Adults	Children	Scheduled Exercises
6/28	10-11 a.m.	4	5	WEEK I.
7/26	10-11 a.m.	3	6	WEEK II.
8/2	10-11 a.m.	3	4	WEEK III.
8/16	10-11 a.m.	3	6	WEEK IV.

Science Sessions

6/23	10-11 a.m.	3	5	Rock & roll, Balanced bodies, Air spinners
6/28	10-11 a.m.	3	5	Move it, Pull it out, Cube
7/12	10-11 a.m.	2	6	Rock & roll, Move it
7/26	10-11 a.m.	3	6	Balancing books, 35 Senses, A hole in one
8/16	10-11 a.m.	2	6	Balancing books, Air spinners

TABLE 4

Family Math and Science Sessions: Fall 1991**Leaders:** Carlos Nolasco and Lauren Aderele**Location:** Horace Mann Middle School; Leonard R. Flynn, Marshall and Visitacion Valley Elementary Schools**Math Sessions**

Date	Time	Adults	Children	Scheduled Exercises
10/9	10-11 a.m.	10	6	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
10/16	10-11 a.m.	10	6	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247
10/29	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
11/5	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
11/12	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 24, 33, 67, 187
11/19 (Marshall)	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 24
11/19 (Horace Mann)	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 32, 30, 49, 62, 25
12/4	10-11 a.m.	8	4	p. 209, 249, 79, 134, 247

Science Sessions

10/10	10-11 a.m.	8	4	Name tag, Decode, Bubble solution
10/17	10-11 a.m.	8	4	Toothpick star, Paper clip, Predator and prey
11/13	10-11 a.m.	9	6	Name tag, Decode, Bubble solution, Evaluation
11/16	10-11 a.m.	8	4	Toothpick star, Paper clip, Evaluation
11/20	10-11 a.m.	8	4	Home accident, Science at home

Sources: "Organizing A Class," from the Family Science Manual by Chevron and the Lawrence Hall of Science, Berkeley, CA. "Family Science," Northwest Equals, P.O. Box 1491, Portland, OR 97207.

Developing Self-Sufficient PEP Groups

WHEN LaPEP was being planned and implemented in 1986 and 1987, one of its long-term goals was to develop a viable strategy that would ensure some permanence of parent empowerment activities. In the original plan, Mission Reading Clinic expected to have the San Francisco Unified School District pick up one .5 FTE coordinator and two .35 FTE support group leaders beginning fall 1991. This would have allowed PEP to reduce private funding support and concentrate the balance of the private funds on stipends for volunteer parent leaders. These volunteers would receive stipends for child care and transportation as well as continuous support, supplies and guidance.

Six bilingual parent volunteer leaders were identified and trained for these roles at four schools and one community agency site. The 1992-1993 plan proposed to incorporate 100% of the coordinator's position and two .35 FTE support group leaders into the special funded budget of the school district or into one of its grant programs. The agreement was that Mission Reading Clinic would continue to operate and manage PEP in the same way other MRC programs function in the school system.

Unfortunately, the fiscal situation during 1991-1992 forced the school district to lay off 21 certificated positions, 150 non-certificated positions and add no new positions. As a

result of these constraints, PEP has modified the strategy for 1992-1993 as follows:

- Request the same level of funding from private sources as in 1991.
- Expand the support group component to include four SFUSD-funded positions for a special middle school redesign program called Project Excel. This funding will provide for a .25 FTE PEP coordinator.
- Use this initial SFUSD funding commitment and parent initiative at school sites and school board levels over the next two years to institutionalize PEP at five to seven elementary and middle school sites.
- Move one support group leader to the MRC family literacy after-school program at Paul Revere Elementary School as an instructional aide and parent resource person. This will cover the costs of at least one support group and expand after-school instruction to 60 children.
- Integrate four parent volunteers who have completed leadership training and are co-leading support groups into group leadership roles at four schools by spring 1992. Support will be provided by private funds in the form of travel and child care stipends by 1993 and, as PEP sites are institutionalized, by SFUSD integration funds.

New Developments

Family Literacy Project

Based on the same basic principles as Family Math and Family Science programs, MRC is developing a new after-school enrichment program — the creation of learning centers at three low-income housing complexes. Activities will integrate reading, language arts and math instruction, parent support groups and Family Language Arts training.

Family Language Arts Curriculum

MRC is developing a home-oriented enrichment program that helps parents learn to initiate and conduct literacy-related

activities such as reading and questioning strategies, encouraging recreational reading, building vocabulary and improving study techniques.

Family Library Development

MRC, with support from Safeway, California Bottlers, KRQR and the California Librarians Association, will raise funds to purchase literature for children and adults that families can use to begin their own home libraries.

What We Are Learning

LAST YEAR we made presentations about PEP at one regional and one national conference. We found participants were primarily interested in PEP outcomes and why we believe we were able to achieve these results.

Of particular interest to conference participants were these outcomes:

- Parent participation has been consistent over an extended period of time.
- While the parent activities began with a specific ethnic focus, i.e., Latino families, the program transferred easily to a variety of ethnic groups and geographic and housing areas.
- School attendance and performance of children seem to improve when their parents participate in PEP.
- Parents become active in community and personal development issues after their successes in schools.

These results have been demonstrated since 1988 and initially were documented in the 1989-1990 PEP report. Further changes and growth are evident in the survey data included as the last section of this report. One of the challenges we assumed last year was to try to determine how these program outcomes occurred.

We examined three questions:

- What is it about the support group meetings and the training formats that keeps parents participating in PEP activities and moving toward attaining the goals they set for themselves?
- Given the school district's history of adversarial relationships between parents and teachers or schools, how did the project develop a collaborative relationship?
- What changes occurred in their children's school performance and attendance and their own interaction with schools after parents became involved in PEP activities?

Each of these questions is examined in detail below. Information on the first two questions derived from staff observations. A formal interview survey of PEP participants provided guidance about the last question.

What keeps parents participating in PEP activities and moving toward attaining the goals they set for themselves?

Another way to look at this question is to ask what went on in the support and leadership groups that made the parents want to continue their participation beyond a one- or two-evening event. Every year six or seven new groups started up, and one or two stopped meeting. The average number of group participants stayed the same or increased slightly each year, with new parents joining the groups as others met their goals and stopped actively participating. Over the last four years, the total level of participation consistently increased by one third to one half.

There appear to be five characteristics of PEP activities and content that contribute to group longevity and consistent and growing participation: Parent participants became successful models or leaders; PEP was geographically

accessible and provided Spanish-language groups for non-English speakers; participants were urged to set achievable goals; the meeting model for parent participation was fair and reliable; and child care was always available.

Parents as successful models and leaders

Activities in the support and leadership groups focused on the needs and expectations of the parents themselves. We have found that encouraging parent ownership of groups is essential in sustaining their participation. Unless activities are relevant and purposeful, parents will not be motivated to participate consistently.

Peer leadership also is essential in developing ownership. During PEP's first two years, we studied whether support group activities and, ultimately, leadership training could be implemented and managed by a cadre of parents rather than a nonindigenous professional staff. Today, all four PEP staff are parents who began as support group and leadership training participants. All co-leaders of groups are participants in the groups. This formal cadre represents the parents with whom they work. Their backgrounds, experiences and expectations are similar.

While this formal leadership is important, an equally important informal leadership develops among group participants. Group members become models for each other. For example, one of parents' typical goals when they first begin participating in a group is to increase their effectiveness in communicating with their children's teachers. For many parents, this can be very challenging, because most if not all of their previous contact with teachers has been when their child is in trouble — which means the parent, too, is in trouble. They have no history of positive, successful, prideful communication with the schools.

Still, we have found that in all the groups, at least one parent has had some success initiating and maintaining a collaborative relationship with a teacher. This parent then becomes both model and coach for other parents. In turn, as these newly successful parents relate their own experiences to new group participants, they become models who can translate their own knowledge into practice for their peers.

Parents become empowered by first recognizing their own competence. They then have the responsibility of sharing that competence with their peers who have similar experiences and needs. Finally, the success is recognized in peer leadership roles that benefit the group as a whole.

Accessible groups

Groups are conducted in the parents' neighborhood or in their child's school as well as in Spanish or English, depending on which language the parents prefer to use. When the school site is not available or it is more comfortable for participants to meet elsewhere, groups are conducted at sites close to parents' homes. However, as much as possible, we

have found that it is best to have groups meet regularly at the school site. As parents spend more and more time in the school, engaged in activities that reward and support them, they become much more comfortable in that environment. They are successful on a turf that previously seemed alien and adversarial.

The other important aspect in making groups accessible and welcoming to parents is offering groups in either Spanish or English. Parents could attend, participate, develop or lead groups without concern for second language ability and knowledge. This is particularly important because of the subtle cultural differences and language nuances that arise when presenting and understanding personal concepts and experiences.

Encouraging participants to set achievable goals

Parents who joined a group had to set two goals they would accomplish during the nine-week support group. One goal was personal — listening to their children more, for example, or getting family members to respond to the parent's needs by helping around the house or following rules. The other goal was school-related — getting teachers to listen to the parent, changing a child's classroom assignment, helping monitor the child's school attendance. Group activities then focused on developing parents' skills and knowledge so they could accomplish their goals, recognize and be recognized for the accomplishment, then help other parents with similar needs.

Fair and reliable process of participation

Participants have equal opportunities to develop new skills and meet personal needs within their group. Facilitators are trained to guide group members in taking turns and maintaining confidentiality. They have learned the value of presenting accurate, relevant information, and encouraging group members to share successful experiences.

Facilitators as well as members share the responsibility for determining the curriculum in each nine-week cycle. Together they control the time and energy put into any one parent's issues and problems. They provide honest feedback and critiques of their peers' needs and development. All participants maintain the rules of confidentiality so that every member is willing to talk about needs, problems and solutions.

The facilitator, as the accountable person in the group, walks a thin line between sharing responsibility for maintaining the group process and controlling the basic rules and values of parent empowerment activities. Parents seem to respect these dual roles imposed on themselves and the group leader.

Child care

Providing child care for parents during the weekly two- to three-hour support or leadership groups was an essential service. Parents could bring their children and concentrate on the meeting without worrying about the children's welfare. This is particularly important for low-income families because

their resources already are stretched simply providing for daily living needs. Also, many families are from cultures in which women are the primary care givers — it would be inappropriate for fathers to babysit the children. Hiring a babysitter can be a hardship for single parents or guardians, or for families in which one adult care giver may be working when the other adult wants to attend a PEP meeting.

During the first two years of the project, child care was a budget and facility priority. However, some parents who stayed active in the project began to recruit older children or household adults as care givers. This strategy has reached a point where today, half or more of the group members, every cycle, provide their own child care.

Parents are showing increasing leadership in managing the logistics as well as process in their groups. This involvement is symbolic of their ownership of PEP activities and provides the foundation for Parent Empowerment Project's continuing growth.

Given the school district's history of adversarial relationships between teachers or schools and parents of at-risk students, how did the project develop a collaborative relationship?

The alienation and adversarial points of view between parents of at-risk children and the schools their children attend has a deep history in the school district where PEP was developed. To build trust among parents and school administrators and teachers, PEP developed a four-step strategy.

The district first had to establish policy and provide incentives for parent participation. Second, once the policy was recognized as valid by district leadership, school leadership and faculty had to be convinced that collaborations with parent-oriented groups would benefit the cooperating school. Third, while these two steps were being planned and implemented, the project had to convince parents that their participation would positively affect their child's education. Finally, to accomplish this, parents also had to experience some initial empowerment from their participation — they had to see that the school viewed their contributions, ideas, demands and proposals as significant.

Without these steps, parents would not become proactive, viable agents of change in their children's schools, nor would schools allow this interaction. This four-step strategy has been followed with great care throughout PEP's development, allowing us to become a component in 15 school sites. The following discussion considers how this strategy worked.

The first principle, a formal, districtwide policy for parent involvement in schools, was the easiest to establish and the most difficult to exploit. The policy is intrinsic to educational philosophy, curriculum and leadership guidelines nationwide. The problem is to take the theory to practice. PEP accomplishes it by never waving the mandate in front of the schools, and, at the same time, developing in parents a realistic awareness that parent involvement was their right. Parents recognized that behind the policy was this idea: Their participation and advocacy is absolutely essential if their children are

to succeed in the public school system. But first, they had to learn how the system worked, and they needed the skills, confidence and support of PEP staff and other parents to use the system to get what would benefit their children. PEP parents learned and later taught each other how to play the game.

As an example, a lot of interaction between parents and school site or district-level personnel takes place when parents disagree with school or classroom assignment. With the district under mandated school busing, for example, many parents of at-risk youngsters do not want their child to attend the assigned school. The district has a fair hearing-appeals process so parents can have a say in where their child goes to school. There are instances, however, when parents do not know how to gain access to that appeal. PEP parents often were unaware that there were alternatives or school district personnel who could help them.

PEP staff developed relationships with the pupil assignment and integration offices. Then, as parents needed help with assignment problems, PEP staff — and later parents — were able to mediate satisfactory assignments. This type of strategy laid a foundation for PEP to be viewed as a community project that worked successfully with schools and parents to the benefit of the child and the credit of the school. This district-level policy became the foundation for approaching school sites.

The focus in the second phase of the strategy was the principal. He or she ultimately is accountable for everything that goes on at the school and also is the most politically and administratively vulnerable. Before accepting a community agency and the parents and staff who represent the agency as school site participants, the principal must have sufficient trust in the agency and its leadership to risk this collaboration.

In the case of PEP, Mission Reading Clinic already had a districtwide reputation for implementing successful reading and language arts programs in elementary, middle and high schools. At the same time, some principals indicated willingness to attempt the project based on the district policy and on MRC's history of collaborative support in the schools.

The third phase of the strategy focuses on the parent at the school site. Parents need to understand how their work with the school and school system can lead to changes that benefit their children. Parents begin by becoming part of a school site physically. They meet in the school and gain first-hand familiarity with the facility and the people who operate it. They learn how long a teacher's day is. They become angry when youngsters from another school deface their school walls with gang symbols.

Just as important, faculty and staff begin seeing parents as human beings who not only are accessible, but also have the authority to enter and be part of the school simply because they are parents. Through this physical proximity, parents and teachers have the opportunity to help individual students. At this point, the two primary educational influences on children — the parent and the teacher — are physically present in the school. Parents become advocates not only for their children,

but for the school as well. They can participate in school-site policy formation and in their children's development as students. We found that within the first year, children's academic performance and attendance at PEP school sites began to improve, but this was an expected result of the collaboration.

It was not enough. For the fourth phase to work, PEP had to involve parents in doing more than trying to change the performance of their children at school. The parent group had to actively support the school in front of the district leadership, the community and the school board.

PEP staff worked closely with parents to help them build rapport with school administrators and faculty. Parents and school personnel together could represent the school positively to the broader community. Parent-initiated collaboration included sponsoring a community thank-you lunch for teachers; at a public meeting, parent groups thanking the school board and superintendent for supporting the collaboration and cooperating with the school; groups volunteering to help faculty get children to the proper rooms on the first day of school. Such proactive advocacy for and support of the school by parents fueled the expectation that PEP would mutually benefit the school and the parents.

This interaction had benefits beyond the school. Increasingly, parents were able to address problems that could be resolved only in broader community and economic terms — that is, as parents became more involved with the school and more empowered by their successes, they began tackling nonschool problems that affected the schools.

Following the 1989 earthquake in Northern California, PEP support group parents contacted the schools to see if they had sustained any damage. Parents participated in relief efforts, locating and providing shelter and food. When schools reopened, PEP staff and parents at eight school sites and one community shelter helped school personnel relocate students and monitor attendance and emotional and academic needs. PEP parents helped other parents communicate with friends and relatives in nearby communities.

Such participation in nonschool, community issues enhances school personnel's estimation of parent involvement. Teachers recognize that parents can be valuable assets, and viable advocates for their children who can provide far more than food for class parties. Parents gain, too, expanding their skills as they address broader issues that affect their families.

In summary, PEP recognizes the home and the community as the primary educators of children and youth, and this is the overriding reason for the project's success. Also, integrating the school and classroom with the homes and communities of students results in long-term learning. The family — and that includes nuclear, extended and foster families — is the place where children and youth develop language, values, world knowledge and expectations for success. As well, the home is where students test, apply and learn to value school learning. PEP builds tangible bridges between the home and the classroom.

Parents and teachers must recognize that the classroom

and the home environments are equally important influences on the child. They must respect each other's needs, concerns and efforts, and must acknowledge the existence and value of personal, cultural, linguistic and economic diversity in the home and school communities. Parents and teachers need thorough information about the school district's systems and protocols and how to make them work to the student's advantage. Finally, parents must maintain their accountability

for their children's development. PEP helps parents acquire knowledge and skills so they can advocate for changes that benefit their children by building quality schools. The goal is to develop a parent-school partnership that will enable children to become independent learners and viable, effective participants in our democratic society. The Parent Empowerment Project has taken some important steps toward reaching this goal.

A Study to Examine PEP Outcomes

What changes occurred in the children's school performance and attendance and in the parents' interaction with the school when they became involved in PEP activities?

PEP administered a formal survey to parents who had completed one or more project activities. The survey had two purposes:

- Quantitative: Using a random sample of parents who participated in PEP activities in the last four years, identify the changes in school performance and retention that the parents observed in their children.
- Qualitative: Using survey responses from the same sample, develop an understanding of how parents used PEP activities to improve their children's school performance and change their own interaction with the school and community agencies.

PEP Survey Results January 1987 - June 1991

1987 - 1988 (9% sample)	5 parents
1988 - 1989 (10% sample)	7 parents
1989 - 1990 (17% sample)	19 parents
1990 - 1991 (19% sample)	31 parents

Procedure for selecting sample: For each of the four years surveyed, 40 parents were randomly selected and one of three PEP researchers attempted to personally contact each selected parent. The number of responses reflect the number of parents from each of the four program years who could be reached either personally or by telephone — a total of 62 parents, or 16% of the population.

Administration of the survey

To maintain objectivity, PEP researchers contacted parents with whom they had not worked in a PEP program. The researchers had received written and verbal instructions for administering the questionnaire including an overview of the survey's purposes and the possible uses of the data. The researcher telephoned the parent, identified himself or herself, read a survey introduction that included its purpose and then administered the questionnaire. Responses were recorded as parents responded. Surveys were administered in the primary

or most comfortable language of the parent. A copy of the survey form and instructions to the researchers appears as Appendix ii.

1. When you started PEP, were you concerned about your child's school performance?

43 parents had specific concerns. 12 parents had no concerns. 7 parents did not indicate one way or the other. Types of concerns: grades, English proficiency, interest, difficulty with subject matter, difficulty reading and understanding, does not like school, teachers are bigots, absences, home work, no friends.

Analysis: Of the parents who indicated they had school-related concerns about their children, most were worried about academic achievement and their own perceived inability to communicate with school personnel.

Three parents did not believe the school was capable of fairly educating their children. The 12 parents who had no school-related concerns about their children felt the youngsters were doing all right in school, but they were interested in increasing their own participation in schools or addressing issues in the surrounding community.

2. What school(s) did your child attend when you started PEP?

Parents indicated their child attended one of the following schools:

Elementary schools: E.R. Taylor, Edison, Marshall, Hawthorne, St. Philip's, Commodore Stockton, Commodore Sloat, Starr King, St. Peter's, Buena Vista, Moscone, Visitation Valley, New Traditions, Bryant, Flynn, St. Anthony's, St. Paul's, Glen Park, St. Elizabeth's, Mission Education Center, Hillcrest

Middle schools: Lick, Aptos, Visitation Valley, Potrero Hill

High schools: McAteer, Downtown, International Academy, Galileo, Mission, Balboa, Wilson.

Analysis: The 62 parents surveyed had 151 children. The majority (44) of parents had children attending elementary schools. Eleven parents had children attending high school only. Seven parents had children attending middle school only or middle and high schools. Eight of the parents who were

surveyed changed the school their child attended after they started participating in PEP.

3. Did PEP activities change the way you communicated with your child's school? How?

51 parents indicated they had positive changes in their communication. 3 parents indicated they already communicated well with the school. 6 parents indicated they did not change the way they communicated. 2 did not respond.

Analysis: The following summarizes how parents indicated their school communication changed. Some parents gave more than one response.

better communication skills	6
found/used translator	11
other parents showed how	19
ask more questions/get answers	14
how to ask questions	11
control my voice/self	7
more involved	24
attend meetings/activities now	28
better English	5
not afraid	3
see teacher as a friend	4
shared doubts/personal needs	10
teacher as an ally	2
better with other parents/their kids	6
get teacher to understand	13
receive more information	9

Of particular interest to PEP staff was the change in the expectations parents had of themselves in establishing a rapport with their children's teachers and schools. Responses indicate parents increased their presence at schools, increased the contacts with school personnel, became more personal in their interactions and increasingly used other parents to help them interact with schools.

4. Before you participated in PEP, how did your child perform in school? (some responses reflected more than one category)

very good	15
good/no problems	9
ok/needed some help	6
slow/not too good	9
cut/poor attendance	13
bad or terrible	18

Were the problems social/emotional or academic?

mostly social/emotional problems	17
mostly academic problems	39

Analysis: Parents were mostly concerned about their children's academic achievement and the school's ability to provide for their children's learning needs. Of the 17 social and emotional problems, 13 were related to irregular attendance or truancy. Other social/emotional problems included

no friends, always sad, and feels strange about school.

Academic problems that concerned parents included inability to deal with material in school, poor homework, bad grades, the need for extra tutoring, lack of knowledge of resources to help their child.

5. How does your child perform now (in school) compared to before you participated in PEP?

worse	0
no change	4
good	7
better	16
much better	22
already doing good (before PEP)	13
no response	4

Analysis: 88% (55) of parents surveyed indicated that their children's school performance had improved since they began PEP activities. This question, in and of itself, does not indicate whether the parents' increasing skills and knowledge about themselves and the schools caused change in their child's educational environment or achievement. Responses to this question, however, do indicate that more than three-quarters of parents believed their children were performing better or much better in school after they participated in support group activities. The following three questions describe the types of skills and knowledge parents developed from PEP activities, and how they were able to use the skills and knowledge to improve educational opportunities for their children.

6. What kinds of skills and knowledge did you acquire in PEP?

In many responses parents indicated more than one area or type of skill or knowledge that they learned, so the total number of responses exceeds the number surveyed.

general information/ resources		school information/ resources	
community resources	4	changing schools/ OER	6
handouts	2	homework	9
information	8	tutorial resources	7
drugs and AIDS	4	help in school	3
extracurricular	2	help with behavior	1
communication		materials to help	1
with parents	5	personal support	7
parents' rights	1		
teacher/school communication		child communication	
talk about my child	2	talk to my children	7
education information	2	support my children	2
talk to a teacher	4	listen to my child	5
deal with problems	1	time with my child	3
open minded	1	appreciate their work	1
don't know	1	no response	3

Analysis: Many parents indicated more than one area of learning. In most cases, parents used the groups to develop confidence and communication skills, and also identified the kind of information they needed to change their daily lives. Responses indicated that the longer parents were involved in support group activities, the more their interests went beyond school-related issues. Parents began to identify and take advantage of resources that affected their broader community, expecting that this wider horizon also would improve their child's education.

7. How do you think this new knowledge or these new skills helped you help your child?

Some parents also gave multiple responses to this question, so the number of answers exceeds the number surveyed.

personal development growth		general knowledge	
better parent communication	1	alcoholism and families	1
English classes/ better English	3	practical advice	1
knew more than I thought	6	children are like adults	1
more confidence/ powerful	5	resources to help behavior	2
not the only one with problems	1	community resources	4
closer to family	2	control myself/ don't hit	1
school-related knowledge		communication	
learned about the school	7	how to talk to child	8
how to talk to school/teacher	5	listen to children	4
materials for child	3	talk about AIDS; drugs	1
college materials	1	listening skills	1
resources for child learning	10	talk to people now	3
tutorial help	3	child knows I care	2
homework	8	time for child	2
nothing noted	2	no response	3

Analysis: Some parents said the personal development and growth that came from participating in support groups helped them address their children's school needs and the community's needs. This success, in turn, made parents more willing to try to communicate with their children, school personnel and the community at large, and the communication was more effective.

Support groups also provided parents with practical information about the school and community. This concrete knowledge and personal growth must be viewed as interactive — parents had to use newly acquired skills to cause the changes and reach the goals they set for themselves. Their successful interactions with school and child led them to seek

still more information and knowledge. The process seems to reinforce cycles of success and growth.

8. Have your child's grades or attendance improved?

grades:		attendance:	
yes	39	yes	21
no	1	no	7
always good	13	always good	24
no response	7	no response	10
don't know	2	don't know	0

Analysis: 63% of parents surveyed said their child's grades had improved since they began participating in PEP. Equally important is the number of parents (21%) who were satisfied with the grades of their children before PEP. While most students were getting poor grades, not all children of PEP parents appear to be academically at risk as elementary students.

To further clarify this question, PEP cross-referenced some data from parents who were satisfied with their children's school achievement. Of the 13 parents who felt their children always did well in school, nine had elementary school-age children. This trend is further demonstrated in the attendance patterns reported by parents. Specifically, only 34% of the children had poor attendance and 39% had good attendance before parents began PEP activities. This seems to contradict the stereotype of parents of at-risk youngsters and the data in Question 5, in which 82% of parents reported improvement in children's academic achievement.

Again, examining the ages of the "always good" children showed that 17 of the 24 parents had elementary-age youngsters. From a qualitative point of view, parents' responses reflect several findings: Parents have high and realistic academic expectations of their children, especially before their children enter middle school. Second, they are very willing to improve themselves in order to enhance their children's educational opportunities. The older a child is or the longer the child is in school, the greater the possibility that the youngster will have difficulties in school. Still, the reported improvements in grades, school performance and attendance since PEP indicate that parents are satisfied with their children's development, whether its source was remediation or enrichment activities. Parents are developing skills and acquiring information that enhances their children's educational performance and opportunities.

9. How much has your interaction with your child's school changed since PEP?

less or none	*4
always involved	11
yes, some	27
a great deal	17
no response	3

* 3 of those surveyed said they did not communicate with schools because they did not trust them.

In what ways did the interaction change?

work more with the school	8
talk to teachers more	20
give directions to school	4
ask more questions	5
ensure child doing work	3
involve group members	4
monitor attendance	1
transferred to another school	1
find ways to get help	3
attend more meetings	8
visit the classroom more	2
they now value education	3

Analysis: 89% of parents indicated that their communication with their child's school had improved or had remained good. Much of this improvement appears to be in communicating with teachers and principals, and in getting involved in school activities such as meetings. The 11 parents who said they were always involved with the schools also indicated that their knowledge of how to help their children with homework and how to locate affordable supplementary instruction (tutoring) had increased. Most parents surveyed did indicate that PEP activities increased the quality and quantity of their interaction with the schools.

Survey conclusions

Survey results indicate that parents' participation in PEP positively affected their ability to interact with the schools and their children's academic achievement. Grades and attendance

increased for 80% of the participants' children, regardless of whether they were performing at a satisfactory level prior to the parents' PEP participation. Also, PEP activities enabled parents to develop personally as well as in general and school-related knowledge.

Data indicated that parents believed PEP activities helped them view themselves as positive, proactive communicators who could and did increase their interaction with schools to address issues for their children. These changes were noted by parents who would not or could not communicate with schools as well as by parents who were active in the schools before they joined PEP. These personal and generic changes were acknowledged by parents whose children were and were not doing well in school.

According to the parents surveyed in this study, PEP participation made a difference in their own and their children's school experiences. Support groups, leadership training and family math and science activities provided low-income parents of at-risk youngsters with the opportunity to work on school-related and community needs. Parents at one school, for example, formed a committee of grandmothers to keep drug-related influences off the playground. In another instance, parents lobbied a local community agency to provide tutoring for the students at their children's school.

PEP empowered parents to change their own and their children's futures. The interaction that PEP has fostered between parents and schools also may have changed in some small yet significant ways how schools view at-risk children, their families and their future together.

APPENDICES

Family Math and Science Curriculum
Parent Survey
Level 1 Curriculum
Parent Leadership Curriculum

APPENDIX 1

FAMILY MATH CURRICULUM

Activities Title	Class Level	Time	Reference Required Page
Week One			
Openers			
Egg carton numbers	I, II, III.	4-8 min.	p. 24
Value of words	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 33
Tax collector	I, II, III.	5-8 min.	p. 67
Create a puzzle	I, II, III.	7-9 min.	p. 187
Week Two			
Target addition	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 32
Balloon ride	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 30
Shopping spree	I, II, III.	5-8 min.	p. 49
Rainbow logic	I, II, III.	5-8 min.	p. 62
Odd or even	II, III.	5-8 min.	p. 25
Week Three			
More or less	I, II.	5-8 min.	p. 209
The lost number	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 249
Graph paper	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 79
Three-bean salad	II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 134
How long is a name	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 134
The lost rules	I, II, III.	10-12 min.	p. 247
Week Four			
Double digit	II.	8-10 min.	p. 111
Dollar digits	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 112
Making a calendar	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 147
Money activities	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 148
Covert patterns	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 206
Simple symmetries	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 184
Week Five			
Weight activities	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 101
Learning the basic facts	I, II.	8-10 min.	p. 108
Hundred chart operation	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 210
Reverse double digit	I, II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 113
Lid ration	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 97
Week Six			
Temperature	II, III.	8-10 min.	p. 103
How close can you get	I, II.	5-8 min.	p. 114
Judy's fractions	I, II.	5-8 min.	p. 125
Place the digits	I, II, III.	5-8 min.	p. 126
Class Level			
Parent participants	I. Elementary 6-9	II. Middle School 9-16	III. High School 15 and more
Members per group	3	4-6	5-6
Children	5	7	8-9

PROCESS: Parent empowerment Project model for Group activities
Assigned exercises (two minimum) per group for 12 to 15 minutes.

FAMILY SCIENCE CURRICULUM

Activities Title	Class Level	Time	Reference Required Page
Session One			
Openers			
Sign in game (exercise)			
Balanced bodies	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	P. 6
Balancing books	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 8
Predict and tip	I, II, III.	4-6 min.	p. 21
Discussion			
Wrap-up			
Clean-up			
Session Two			
The predator and prey (exercise)			
Predict and tip	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 21
35 sense	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 1
A hole in one	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 2
Air spinners	I, II, III.	2-3 min.	p. 3
Move it	I, II, III.	2-3 min.	p. 19
Discussion			
Wrap-up			
Clean-up			
Session Three			
Consumer injuries (exercise)			
Predict and tip	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 21
Pull it out	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 23
Quart to pint	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 24
Rim roll	I, II, III.	2-4 min.	p. 25
Discussion			
Wrap-up			
Clean-up			
Session Four			
Predict and tip	I, II, III.	6-8 min.	p. 21
Water drop	I, II, III.	4-5 min.	p. 32
Web building (exercise)			
Discussion			
Wrap-up			
Clean-up			

Sources: "Organizing A Class" From the Family Science Manual by Chevron and the Lawrence Hall of Science, Berkeley, CA, "Family Science, 1988" Northwest Equals: P.O. Box 1491 Portland, OR 97207-1491.

APPENDIX 2

The Parent Empowerment Project Questionnaire

Support Groups, Leadership Training, Family-Centered Literacy and Dropout Prevention
January 1987 to June 1991

This questionnaire is to be administered by a PEP staff member who has not been the support group or leadership training group leader of the person who is being interviewed.

The purpose of the interview is to find out whether PEP activities have changed: how parents interact with their children regarding school matters such as homework, attendance, grades, problems with teacher or other students, etc.; how parents view their child's literacy and school performance since the parent participated in PEP activities; how the parent has determined the changes in school performance should the child indicate change; what changes the parent has found the school has made in the quality and types of learning activities, interactions, nurturing, etc. that affect the child; what, if any community resources the parent generated, found, used to help the child improve school performance; and if community or non-school resources were used, how the parent

located and gained access to the resources.

In asking the questions, if you or the parent are talking about more than one child, then substitute "children." The interview is to be conducted in the language that is most comfortable for the parent.

Record the responses to the questions on this sheet. In recording responses, use exact words as much as possible when summarizing lengthy comments and explanations. If there are particular points about the conversation, the interview setting, the mood of the parent or other points you feel useful for increasing our understanding of the meaning of this information the parent is giving us, please note these points on the back of the interview sheet. Please begin the interview by briefly explaining the purpose of the survey, telling the parents that neither their name nor their child's name will be used, asking if they have any questions. Then ask:

When did you participate in PEP or LaPEP activities?

Did your child change schools since you started PEP? When? If so, how?

1. When you started PEP, were you concerned about your child's school performance? What concerned you?
2. Which school did your child attend when you started PEP?
3. Did PEP activities change the way you communicated with your child's school? How?
4. Before you participated in PEP or LaPEP, how did your child perform in school?
5. How does your child perform now compared to before you participated in PEP?
6. What kinds of skills or information did you learn in PEP?
7. How do you think this new knowledge and/or the skills have helped you help your child?
8. Have your child's grades or attendance improve since PEP? How?
9. How much has your interaction or contact with your child's school changed since PEP? In what ways?
10. Do you have any other comments about PEP activities or your child's school work?

Interviewer _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 3

PARENT EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (PEP) LEVEL I CURRICULUM

WEEK #1

- I. WELCOME
- II. INTRODUCTION TO THE GROUPS
- III. PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS
- IV. PARTICIPANT GOALS

WEEK #2

- I. FOCUS ON YOU
- II. INDIVIDUAL GOALS: Long and short-term goals
- III. HOW DO PARENTS COPE: Buddy system
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #3

- I. FOCUS ON THE CHILD/YOUTH
- II. MONITORING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
- III. HOME AND SOCIAL LEARNING
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #4

- I. FOCUS ON SCHOOLS: Selecting schools and teachers
- II. PARENTS IN ACTION
- III. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #5

- I. PEER PRESSURE
- II. SELF-ESTEEM (BUILDING)
- III. FOLLOW UP ON PERSONAL GOALS
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #6

- I. CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE: Weaving in the types of discipline
- II. THE COMMON ERROR AND HOW TO AVOID IT
- III. MOTIVATION

WEEK #7

- I. HOW DO YOU DISCUSS DRUGS AND OTHER SENSITIVE ISSUES
- II. CULTURAL AWARENESS & INFLUENCES
- III. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #8

- I. EMPLOYMENT & CAREER PLANNING
- II. TRAINING ALTERNATIVE
- III. PERSONAL GOALS
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #9

- I. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION
- II. COMMUNITY COLLEGE ED. G.E.D. HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY
- III. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #10

- I. HOUSEHOLD BUDGET MANAGEMENT
- II. TIME MANAGEMENT
- III. INDIVIDUAL GOALS
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #11

- I. FOLLOW-UP ON GOALS
- II. OPEN AGENDA
- III. START POST-INTERVIEW FORMS
- IV. INDIVIDUAL TIME

WEEK #12

- I. GOAL EVALUATION
- II. GROUP EVALUATION
- III. FUTURE GOALS FOR PEP CLOSING

APPENDIX 4

PARENT EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (PEP) LEVEL 2 CURRICULUM

Groups in Spanish and English meet for two hours once a week from 10 to 12 weeks. Day and evening sessions are available. Child care is provided. In addition to the scheduled topics, there will be time for individual time and support. All talks are confidential.

WEEK #1

- I. WELCOME
- II. INTRODUCTION TO GROUP
- III. PARTICIPANTS GOALS
- IV. PRE-INTERVIEW

WEEK #6

- I. HELP YOUR CHILD UNDERSTAND HIS/HER FEELINGS
- II. HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SENSITIVE SUBJECTS
- III. EXERCISES
- IV. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #2

- I. ACTIVE LISTENING
- II. LISTENING SKILLS
- III. EXERCISES
- IV. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #7

- I. HOW TO NEGOTIATE
- II. EXERCISES
- III. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #3

- I. BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION
- II. TALKING WITHOUT BLAMING "I MESSAGES"
- III. EXERCISES
- IV. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #8

- I. FOLLOW-UP GOALS
- II. EXERCISES
- III. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #4

- I. FOLLOW-UP GOALS
- II. EXERCISES
- III. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT
- IV. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #9

- I. LEARN TO GIVE VALIDATION
- II. EXERCISES
- III. FOLLOW-UP GOALS

WEEK #5

- I. HOW TO GIVE EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK
- II. EXERCISES
- III. FOLLOW-UP GOALS
- IV. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

WEEK #10

- I. GROUP EVALUATION
- II. POST INTERVIEW CLOSURE

APPENDIX 5

Parent Leadership Curriculum

Parent leadership training has three components:

- To develop knowledge of PEP goals and objectives, support group curricula, methods and techniques for effective group facilitation, and materials and resources available to parents.
- To enable parents to conceptualize their own leadership objectives as support group leaders.
- To develop skills for effective group facilitation, recruitment, counseling and school and agency communication.

Leadership Training Syllabus

Section I

1. INTRODUCTIONS OF PEP AND MRC PROGRAMS AND STAFF
2. PEP HISTORY, PURPOSE, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
3. INTRODUCTION TO PEP SUPPORT GROUP MODEL AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING
4. REVIEW AND MODIFICATION OF SUPPORT GROUP CURRICULUM
5. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Section II

1. SETTING AND REACHING EMPOWERMENT GOALS
2. PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING SUPPORT GROUP ACTIVITIES
3. TECHNIQUES OF GROUP MANAGEMENT AND FACILITATION
4. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Section III

1. MRC, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY AND OTHER INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES
2. RECRUITMENT AND GROUP ORGANIZATION
3. LOGISTICS - Child care, Transportation, Facility, etc.
4. INDIVIDUAL AND LEADERSHIP GROUP SUPPORT